



Staff Report

TO: Town of Loomis, Town Council and Planning Commission
FROM: Mary Beth Van Voorhis, Town of Loomis Planning Director
Cynthia Walsh, Senior Associates Planner - Placeworks
DATE: July 20, 2021
RE: TOWN OF LOOMIS 2021-2029 DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT

Recommendation:

1. Hear presentation from staff, receive input, and discuss the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) revised process and findings identified in their July 12, 2021 Review letter; and
2. Provide direction to Staff regarding site identification to accommodate the Town's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

Issue Statement and Discussion:

The Housing Element is one of seven (7) State-mandated elements that comprise the Town's General Plan and that serves as a policy document to assess housing characteristics, community needs and establishes programs to meet those needs. California State law requires all municipalities to update the Housing Element periodically. The Town's current Housing Element was adopted in 2014 by Town Council and is required to adopt an updated version for the 2021-2029 State Housing and Community Development planning period (i.e., 6th Cycle) by May 15, 2021. To remain on an eight-year planning cycle, the Town must adopt its housing element within 120 calendar days from the statutory due date of May 15, 2021, which is September 10, 2021.

Following recommendation from Planning Commission and Town Council, Staff submitted the Public Review Draft Housing Element to HCD on May 14, 2021 for a 60-day review period. On June 24, 2021, Staff participated in a call with HCD to discuss their initial findings, and minor revisions were submitted on June 28, 2021 in response to HCD's comments. The revised Public Review Draft Housing Element was posted to the website June 29, 2021 and is included as Attachment 1.

In response to comment provided during the June 24, 2021 HCD call, Draft Housing Element revisions included:

- » Expanded explanation of outreach efforts
- » Added survey responses on housing conditions
- » Identified qualified entities to acquire affordable units
- » Added block group level analysis of income and racial distributions
- » Identified racially concentrated area of affluence
- » Identified housing needs for special needs groups
- » Added analysis of employment opportunities and environmental conditions
- » Provided a typical timeframe between entitlement and building permit

- » Added fair housing metrics

Following the 60-day review period, the Town received a letter from HCD on July 12, 2021, stating that the draft element addresses many statutory requirements; however, additional revisions are necessary to comply with State Housing Element Law. The findings are included in Attachment 2 and summarized below:

1. An inventory of land suitable and available for residential development.
 - a. Large Sites. The element needs to identify the location of the seven-acre Residential High-Density Overlay (Site 8) in relationship to the larger 61-acre site formerly known as The Village. Additional discussion is needed regarding the larger 61-acre site and clarification as to whether it has been subdivided into parcels and the likelihood that the overlay site could be developed separate from rest of the 61-acre site.
 - b. Infrastructure. The element needs to be revised to demonstrate sufficient existing or planned water, sewer, and other dry utilities supply capacity, including the availability and access to distribution facilities to accommodate the Town's regional housing need for the planning period.
 - c. Realistic Capacity. The element assumed 100%-unit capacity and should be revised to consider factors such as land-use controls, development trends including typical density of existing or approved developments at similar affordability levels, performance standards or other relevant factors.
2. Affirmatively furthering fair housing.
 - a. Sites Inventory. The element should be revised to include an analysis of the identified sites to demonstrate that the sites inventory affirmatively furthers fair housing and that sites are located throughout the community. This is particularly critical as the element only identifies one site (Site 8) to accommodate its need for lower-income households.
3. Identify actions that will be taken to make sites available during the planning period.
 - a. Programs will need to be revised to address a shortfall of sites and zoning for a variety of housing.

Next Steps

The Town must address the findings in HCD's July 12, 2021 letter and resubmit a revised Housing Element to HCD for review and approval.

To address HCD's findings and accommodate the Town's RHNA, Staff is proposing to revise the sites analysis, to assume an 80 percent realistic capacity on Site 8 which would yield 140 units instead of 175 units and amend the General Plan map to apply the overlay on Site 8 specifically to seven acres behind Raley's. Additionally, Staff is recommending that the Town apply the High-Density Overlay to Sites 9 through 25 in Heritage Park, a total of 2.7 acres, with the remaining portion of Heritage Park designated as open space.

Staff is open to additional feedback and comment regarding site identification, but specific criteria must be considered:

- » The acreage must accommodate 48 lower-income units at 20+ dwelling units per acre (approximately 3 acres)
- » Sites must be larger than 0.5 acres and smaller than 10 acres
- » Must be new units
- » Cannot be ADUs – HCD has approved the Town's ADU projection
- » If mixed use is proposed, the site must allow for 100% residential and require 50% FAR residential

ATTACHMENTS

1. Revised Draft Town of Loomis Draft 2021-2029 Housing Element – June 30, 2021
2. HCD Findings Letter dated July 12, 2021